



The WisDOT Connector *Express*

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More Wisconsin motorists tightening their belts

More people are clicking their seat belts in Wisconsin than ever before. According to a recently-completed observational survey, WisDOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety reports that just over 75 percent of motorists are buckling up - a 2 percent increase over the 2005 survey. Safety officials emphasize that wearing a safety belt is the single most important thing motorists can do to save their life in the event of a crash. It's estimated the 2 percent increase amounts to 12 saved lives in Wisconsin each year. While the increase is good news, seat belt usage in Wisconsin remains lower than neighboring states and the country in general.

Highway safety focus of upcoming conference

Safety belt use will be one of many issues addressed at the 32nd annual Governor's Conference on Highway Safety set for August 23 – 24 in Madison. Law enforcement officials and traffic safety advocates from around the state will gather at Madison's Marriott West to learn from state and national safety experts including: Gordon Graham, a 30-year veteran of California law enforcement; Richard Malone, a medical investigator in New Mexico and a nationally-recognized professional in crash investigation and injury prevention; and Miss America 2006 Jennifer Berry who lost a friend in an alcohol-related crash and whose platform issue is combating drunken driving and underage drinking. More information about this year's conference can be found at: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/news/events/safety/index.htm>

More people riding the rails

Amtrak's Hiawatha service between Milwaukee and Chicago continues setting ridership records. June ridership totaled 51,729 - a 13% increase over June of 2005 and the 19th straight month in which a ridership record has been set for that particular month. Calendar year ridership through June totals 275,739 – a 10% increase over the same period last year - setting the stage for another ridership record this year of nearly 600,000 riders if current trends continue. Last month, an average of 255 people used the new Milwaukee Airport Rail Station daily. Beginning August 1st, Hiawatha fares are set to increase slightly – the one-way fare between Milwaukee and Chicago will increase \$1 to \$21. It is the first Hiawatha fare increase since 2001.

Plan on fair weather from August 3 – 13

The 155th annual Wisconsin State Fair is set for August 3rd through the 13th at State Fair Park in Milwaukee. Along with the standard animal exhibits, rides, games and a wide variety of food on a stick, fairgoers will have the opportunity to visit the WisDOT-sponsored booth. There, people will be able to get an up-close look at a model of the Marquette Interchange and discuss any traffic enforcement concerns with a Wisconsin State Trooper. More info on the fair can be found at: <http://www.wsfp.state.wi.us/home/wsfp/>

Upcoming events

August 3-13 – Wisconsin State Fair, Milwaukee

August 23-24 – Governor's Conference on Highway Safety, Middleton

September 5-8 – Wisconsin State Bicycle and Pedestrian Summit, Madison

Check www.dot.wisconsin.gov/news/events/index.htm for more event listings and details.

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